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**For Immediate Release**

## **Digital Access Center in Akron Closes**

(Akron, Ohio) Nov. 17, 2009 – OneCommunity, a Cleveland-based nonprofit that facilitates the use of broadband to drive economic development and civic progress, announced today that effective immediately, the Akron-based Knight Center of Digital Excellence will be closed.

OneCommunity created the center two years ago with funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. The purpose of the center was to consult with community organizations across the nation with the goal of creating affordable broadband access for all.

“Universal broadband access remains a priority for Knight Foundation and we’re committed to continuing to advance this goal through community projects directly, both in Akron and elsewhere” said Paula Ellis, Knight Foundation’s Vice President for Strategic Initiatives. As an example, Ellis cited Knight Foundation’s support, totaling \$625,000, including an additional \$250,000 for the “Connect Akron” program which involves the University of Akron, OneCommunity and the City of Akron.

“We’re extremely grateful to have had the opportunity of spreading our methodologies and processes across the country,” explains Scot Rourke, president of OneCommunity. At the time of the inception of the Knight Center two years ago, there was not yet a broad movement towards a national broadband policy. Since then the Obama administration has announced broadband stimulus support of more than \$7 billion.

Knight Foundation recently released a report by the Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy, intended to influence national policy makers and community leaders. The Commission especially calls for universal broadband access to help meet the information needs of America’s communities to avoid creating “second class citizens” in the digital age. For more about the Commission’s report, visit [www.knightcomm.org](http://www.knightcomm.org).

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**About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation advances journalism in the digital age and invests in the vitality of communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Knight Foundation focuses on projects that promote community engagement and lead to transformational change. For more, visit [www.knightfoundation.org](http://www.knightfoundation.org).